7: Joest--62 [4] E-5 (no date) 1882 Formosan Aborigines
116, 771, 778 Chin-hoan

The religion of the Chinwan natives seems to be on a very primitive level. I did not see any idols or temples. Every Chinwan tribe or village, has a sacred animal which is believed to protect the people in that village. These animals, snakes, leopards, etc., are kept in cages and fed by the natives.

19: Guérin and Bernard--562 [4] G-3 (ca. 1866) 1868 Formosan Aborigines
116, 771, 828

The aborigines do not have any external cult; there is no adoration of gods or fetishes, and no belief in a future existence. However, they invoke a kind of familiar genius who visits them in their dreams; he does not assume a divine shape, but comes in the guise of a father, a mother or close relative. There is never any doubt about the interpretation of a dream; the councillor limits himself to recommending or forbidding the action which the dreamer envisages.

35: Collingwood--142 [3] D-2 (1866) 1867 Formosan Aborigines
116, 771 Sek-hoan

"We looked in vain for any indication of their religious ideas. Over the door of the village, by which we entered, some one had stuck a joss paper, after the manner of the Chinese, and probably some Chinese had done it, but there were no joss-houses or temples in the hamlet, nor did we find any in the houses, though among the poorer Chinese almost every house has a little altar to the lares in the principal room. We inquired as well as we were able of the inhabitants on this point, but were able to elicit nothing from them."

37: Steere --304-305 S-3 (1873-74?) 1875 Formosan Aborigines
116, 511, 427, 779, 771, 166 Pepo-hoan

"The Pepo-whans are very poor, having mortgaged the poor lands they now occupy to the Chinese, so that they live principally upon sweet potatoes, the one rice crop that the land produces going to pay rent or the interest on their debts. They burn charcoal and the women carry it in baskets upon their heads to the Chinese villages for sale. They were visited about three years ago by Dr. Maxwell, a Scotch missionary, and they received Christianity readily, the Chinese worship of idols and ancestors having but little root among them, while the traditions they still possess of their ancient teachers probably influenced them to some extent. There are now several hundred christians among them at Kamana, Backsa, etc., with a number of schools and chapels established. The Pepo-whans of Baukimseng, differ from their brethren farther north in their ancient language, and the women, instead of a turban, wear a broad conical hat, like the Hak-kas near them, and this is highly ornamented with tinsel and bits of glass. They are crowded back upon the poor stony lands near the mountains, and they go to their fields armed with lances and fire-locks to protect themselves from attack. The Pepo-whans have nearly lost their love for hunting and fishing, and support themselves almost entirely from the produce of their fields. There seems to be but little hope of regaining a foot-hold on the [305] western side of the island, and they will probably be compelled to migrate, like their brethren who have gone before them, to the east coast."

37: Steere--306-307 S-3 (1873-74?) 1875 Formosan Aborigines
116, 157, 771, 533 Sek-hoan

"The ancient worship of the Lek-whan, like that of the Pepo-whan of the South, seems to have consisted of certain idolations, dances and songs, and the worshiping of a boar's or deer's skull. They differ materially from the Chinese in a natural love and taste for music. They have fitted several of their wild idolation tunes to Christian hymns, which they sing with great spirit. They learn European music readily, but seem to prefer their own. They are [307] naturally honest and hospitable, and we had great trouble in getting them to take pay for the articles of food we bought of them."

37: Steere--309 [2] S-3 (1873-74?) 1875 Formosan Aborigines
116, 771, 764, 534 Chin-hoan

"They do not appear to have any settled religious system, but to be terribly troubled with superstitions and fears of supernatural beings and causes. They are said to bury their dead with terrible fear, hastily covering the body with earth, and then all running away, and no more visiting the spot.

While hunting birds with some boys of the tribe, I strayed into a thick dark grove of bamboos near the village, and when I came out, the people motioned me away with their hands, and would not allow me to come near until the old Lek-whan guide who accompanied us, had baptized me upon the face, and hands, and breast, with water. I afterward understood that I had entered one of their burial places. When we got ready to return, they begged us not to drink of the springs on our way down the mountain, for fear that we should enchant them. They make curious little musical instruments by cutting a tongue in a piece of bamboo, which is put between the teeth, and the tongue made to vibrate by pulling a string tied to the end of the bamboo. The tone is modulated by the breath, as in a jews-harp, which it much resembles in sound."

37: Steere--311 [1] S-3 (1873-74?) 1875 Formosan Aborigines
116, 482, 771, 609, 787, 825 Chin-hoan

"They carry burdens upon a high wooden frame that is strapped to the back, instead of by the universal Chinese method of a pole across the shoulder. I could find but little traces of religion, but plenty of superstitions. I was one day astonished by the band with which I was traveling suddenly all dropping to the ground and beginning to groan as if they expected to die. Inquiring the cause of this, I found that a certain bird, to which ominous powers are attributed, had cried out on the left side of the path we were traveling, and this was considered a bad omen for us. After a few minutes the party got up and moved on, though all were still groaning and beating their gunstocks with their knives; and they did not regain their composure until the same bird was heard to call out on the right side of the path, when they moved on as usual. They seem to have little or no connection with the other savages, but to live in mortal fear of them. If they ever were in the habit of taking the heads of their enemies, it must have been long ago, as the proofs have disappeared."

39: Wiedfeldt--14 [3] F-3 (1913) 1917 Formosan Aborigines
116, 771 Atayal

Their imagination is not much more productive in religious matters... The Atayals have neither God nor devil; they worship neither heaven, nor sun, nor earth.

51:Chen and Coe E-5 (1953)1954 ADI Formosa
Formosan Aborigines AD4



The other part of the *mi?ʃao* divinatory instrument is called *tsohak*. This is a piece of hardwood about 18cm in length. It is held under one foot of the diviner when in use. The end held under the foot is often somewhat thinner than the other end. The other end is about 4cm thick and has two or three grooves transversely carved on one side. These grooves are called *ŋakto*.

During divination, the *tsohak* is placed on the ground with the grooved side facing downward. The end without grooves is held under one foot of the diviner. The central portion of the inner face of the *ʃao* is breathed upon and smeared with ashes before it is used. Then, with the end with the mane-like fibres in his left hand, and with the end with the bamboo-joint in his right hand, the diviner saws the *ʃao* in the *ŋakto* of the *tsohak*. The *ʃao* will be severed by this heavy sawing, and the result of the divination can be read from the shape of the severed end of the part without the bamboo-joint, with the bamboo exterior facing the diviner.

By comparative study, Utsurikawa found that *mi?ʃao* divination has affinities in southeast Asia, particularly with the Kenyah and the Kayan of Borneo and with the Nagas of Assam. He therefore considered this technique as an Indonesian culture trait.

### *Priesthood*

Among the Tavarong Ami, priests were called *kakita:n*. The office of *kakita:n* was hereditary: succession was by primogeniture through the female line. Formerly there were five or six *kakita:n* families in Tavarong, but only one, that of the late Saumah-Kuriu, remains in existence today, and will be described later. The cause of the decrease in *kikita:n* families was, according to one informant, due to the prohibition placed on native rituals by the Japanese authorities. The priestly families consequently declined because they had lost their function. The Saumah-Kuriu family retained its standing as it owned a ceremonial house with carved wooden posts; this house was designated an historical monument in 1935 by the Japanese colonial administration.

This same ceremonial house was reported by Utsurikawa (1936) and Tsijiiwa (1944). The present house keeps its original form today although it has been rebuilt in recent years and now is only one half the size of the original house described by the above two authors. Its present plan and a side-view are shown in the accompanying illustration (Figure 1). According to Utsurikawa, the original house was abandoned in May 1930 on the death of the family head Saumah-Kuriu, a decision reached at that time by the family members on account of frequent misfortune. The house itself is unique: it is the only one in the entire Ami area having carved wooden posts. The designs on these posts are human and animal figures, curved lines, and sawtooth patterns. The geometrical designs are always symmetrical in arrangement. In the changing culture of the Ami, a new type of house has been adopted by the tribesmen. This ceremonial house remains as the only surviving example of their original type of dwelling.